

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 ABF-01 AGRE-00 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 HEW-04
HUD-01 INR-07 INT-05 LOC-01 NASA-01 NSAE-00
NSF-01 OMB-01 USIA-06 OES-07 SMI-01 TRSE-00 FS-01
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TAGS:

SUBJ: S&T COOPERATION/REQUESTS FOR FISCAL DATA; TALKS WITH GOE
OFFICIALS.

1. SUMMARY: IN RECENT MTGS WITH MIN OF STATE, DR. NAIM ABU TALEB
AND MFA OFFICER KHALID OSMAN, DETAILED INFO ON US S&T PROGRAMS IN
EGYPT WAS REQUESTED. PARTICULAR INTEREST IN COORDINATION ANNUAL
DISBURSEMENTS FOR SFCP RESEARCH AND SETTING PRIORITIES.END SUMMARY.

2. SCIATT, DOYON AND SELCUK (NSF) AND DR. MOHAMED ABDEL HADY, DIR.
REMOTE SENSING PROJ. MET WITH DR. ABU TALEB JAN 15, MIN OF STATE
CONFIRMED THAT HE NOW HAD RESPONSIBILITIES IN S&T. HE SAID HE
WAS'NT READY TO GO INTO OVERALL DETAIL; HOWEVER FROM CONVERSATION,
IT APPEARS ROLE IS COORDINATING OR "CATALYTIC", NOT DIRECT LINE
CONTROL. US S&T PROGRAMS WERE DESCRIBED IN GENERAL; SCIATT IS TO
MEET ABU TALEB AGAIN NEXT WEEK TO GIVE HIM LIST OF SFCP PROJECTS
AND DISCUSS FOCUS OF ACTIVITIES.

3. MIN. NOTING THAT PART OF HIS JOB WAS TO EXPEDITE PROJECTS, ASKED
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ABOUT "DELAYS" IN AID/NSF INSTRUMENTATION REPAIR PROJECT. HE WAS
TOLD THAT DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT CRITERIA AND DEFINING ROLES ON US
SIDE HAD TAKEN TIME, BUT ADMIN PROBLEMS WERE RESOLVING AND IMPLEMEN-
TATION SHOULD NOT BE MUCH FURTHER DELAYED. JWG'S WERE ALSO DISCUSSED
AS A MECHANISM FOR PRIORITY SETTING. MIN SAID HE HAD SOME THOUGHTS
ABOUT STRENGTHENING THIS ACTIVITY; HE DID NOT ELABORATE- ABU TALEB
WAS SUPPORTIVE OF NSF SFCP WORKSHOPS AND ARRANGED FOR A LATER MTG.

ON THIS (SEPTTEL).

4. ON JAN.19, MR. KHALID OSMAN MFA LINE OFFICER WORKING ON FOREIGN TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS CALLED ON SCIATT TO DISCUSS US SFCP PROCEDURES. HE SAID THAT MFA SOMETIME AGO HAD NOTIFIED GOE AGENCIES AND UNIVS THAT ALL COOPERATIVE ACTICITIES WITH FOREIGN ENTITIES PROJECTS REQUIRED MFA CONCURRENCE WHICH AS FAR AS WE KNOW HAS NEVER BEEN WITHHELD ON US PROJECTS). HOWEVER, SOME PROJECTS WERE NOT FORWARDED BY RESEARCHERS UNTILL AFTER THEY WERE UNDERWAY OR FOREIGN INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES ALREADY HAD BEEN COMMITTED. HE ALSO ASKED FOR SFCP DISBURSEMENT FIGURES FOR FY'77 AND AN UPDATED LIST OF SFCP PROJECTS.

5. SCIATT EXPLAINED USG AND EMB. SFCP CLEARANCE PROCEDURES, NOTING THAT NEITHER USG NOR GOE PROCEDURES AS THEY STAND EMB OR USG AGENCIES TO SECURE MFA CLEARANCE PER SE, AND THAT JOINT CRITERIA FOR SFCP PROJECT EVALUATION HAD BEEN WORKED OUT TWO YEARS AGO WITH SENIOR MFA OFFICIALS, WHICH THE EMB USED AND TO WHICH MFA ALSO PRESUMABLY REFERRED. WE WILL SUPPLY THE UPDATE LIST AND THE DISBURSEMENT FIGURES. WHILE AGREEING TO ORALLY INFORM EGYPTIANS WHO INQUIRE ABOUT PROCEDURES THAT THEY SHOULD INFORM THEMSELVES ABOUT MFA REQUIREMENTS AT AN EARLY STAGE OF PROJ. DEVELOPMENT; SCIATT POINTED OUT THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE RESTS WITH MFA AND THE GOE INSTITUTIONS; NOT USG AND THAT TECHNICAL REVIEWS BY MFA, GIVEN THE VOLUME AND PARTICULARLY IF "TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE" CRITERIA ARE USED COULD CREATE PROBLEMS.
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6. COMMENT.

MIN ED AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HILMY HAD EARLIER TOLD SCIATT THAT A COORDINATING ROLE FOR DR. ABU TALEB WAS POSSIBLE. THIS IS NOW A FACT; HOWEVER IT NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER HIS ROLE WILL BE LIMITED TO "TROUBLE SHOOTING" ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION OR WHETHER, AS TO USG TECHNICAL PROGRAMS, HE HAS REPLACED DR.AHMED EFFAT THE FORMER, (NOMINAL) COORDINATOR.

7. THE MFA CONCERNS ARE NOT NEW. HOWEVER IN THE PAST THEY HAVE LARGELY LIMITED THEMSELVES TO FOREIGN POLICY REVIEWS AND CHECKING FOR FISCAL "ABUSES"; ON LATTER POINT USUALLY IN INFORMAL CONSULTATION WITH SCIATT AND RESEARCHER. UP TILL NOW ESSENTIALLY ONE MAN MFA OFFICE DIDN'T ALLOW FOR MORE. STAFF OF MFA OFFICE OF INT'L TECHNICAL COOP.FOR DEVELOP; HAS HOWEVER GROWN TO AT LEAST THREE AND THEY ARE SEEKING MORE ACTIVE ROLE RE BOTH SFCP AND AID PROGRAMS IN ADDITION TO THEIR ORIGINAL ROLE IN UNDP/UNIDO AND SOME UNESCO PROGRAMS. FORCUS IS ALSO SHIFTING FROM "ABUSES/FOREIGN POLICY" CONCERNS TO FUND UTILIZATIONS. WHEN THEY BECOME AWARE OF DISBURSEMENT TOTALS, WE CAN EXPECT MORE QUESTIONS TO BE RAISED; PARTICULARLY ON PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING; A POINT TO BE BORNE IN MIND DURING JWG MTGS.

8. FYI. ABU TALEB SAYS THAT MFA INTEREST IN UNIV. PROJECTS BEGAN
SEVERAL YEARS AGO BECAUSE OF CONCERNS ABOUT THE USSR AND EASTERN
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ALLEGEDLY USING GRANTS TO BUY POLITICAL ALLEGIANCE

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FROM PROFESSORS AND OVER HEAVY EASTERN BLOCK STAFFING ON SOME UN
PROJECTS. ABU TALEB, AS FORMER UNIV. DEPT. HEAD, IS OPPOSED TO
BECOME INVOLVED IN NORMAL MFA OPERATIONS. HE DID SAY THAT IF A
GOOD PROJECT BECAME STUCK IN ANY GOE AGENCY FOR BUREAUCRATIC
REASONS, HE COULD INTERVENE.END FYI. ABU TALEB AS "COORDINATOR"
IS ALSO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN TOLD SFCP EXPENDITURES AS WELL AS
AID PROJECTS. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ANY INFO AVAILABLE TO DEPT
ON CURRENT SFCP DISBURSEMENTS TO CHECK WITH OUR OWN RECORDS.EILTS

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